REMARKS

By the present response, claims 1, 4, 6, and 7 will have been amended, while claims 8-11 will have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

In view of the herein contained cancellation of claims 8-11, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the outstanding rejection and an indication of the allowability of all the claims pending in the present application, in due course. Such action is respectfully requested and is now believed to be appropriate and proper.

Initially, Applicants respectfully wish to thank the Examiner for indicating the acceptance of the drawings filed in the present application on March 28, 2001. Applicants further wish to respectfully thank the Examiner for acknowledging their claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 as well as for confirming receipt of the certified copies of the priority documents in support of such claim for foreign priority.

Finally, Applicants respectfully thank the Examiner for returning the initialed PTO-1449 Form that accompanied the Information Disclosure Statement filed in the present application on June 28, 2001 and for confirming consideration of all the documents cited in the above-noted Information Disclosure Statement.

Turning to the merits of the outstanding Official Action, the Examiner withdrew claims 8, 10 and 11 from further consideration as being drawn to a non-elected invention. The Examiner addressed Applicants' election with traverse and found the same not to be persuasive. Thus, the Examiner deemed the requirement proper and made the same final.

For reasons substantially as set forth in the above-mentioned election with traverse of July 11, 2003, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdraw of the restriction requirement.

Nevertheless, merely in order to expedite the prosecution of the present application and without in any way acquiescing in the propriety of the Examiner's restriction requirement, Applicants have canceled all the claims directed to the non-elected invention.

In the outstanding Official Action, the Examiner rejected claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by IMAI. By the present Response, without acquiescing in the propriety of the rejection, and solely in order to expedite the allowance of the claims in the present application, Applicants have canceled claim 9.

The Examiner indicated claims 1-7 are allowed. Applicants respectfully thank the Examiner for the indication of allowability and submits that these claims are clearly patentable over the references of record in the present application.

In this regard, Applicants note the Examiner's Statement of Reasons for the Allowance. However, while Applicants do not necessarily disagree with the particular features noted by the Examiner, Applicants respectfully note that each of the claims in the present application is directed to a combination of features and that the patentability of each claim is thus based the particular combination of features recited therein. Accordingly, the reasons for allowability should not necessarily be limited to those features enumerated by the Examiner.

By the present Response, Applicants have amended several of the claims. In particular, the claims have been amended to improve the language thereof. In other words, the language of the claims has been revised so as to be more fully in compliance with U.S. idiom, syntax and grammar. Additionally, the language of the claims has been revised so as to more clearly define Applicants' invention. However, by the amendments to the claims contained in the present Response, Applicants have not narrowed the claims. Further, since there was no rejection applied to allowed claims 1-7, the amendments submitted herein have not been made for a purpose related to patentability, and accordingly, no estoppel should attach thereto.

In addition, Applicants have also deleted the term "with life-size transverse magnification" from claim 1. Applicants submit that the deletion of this term does not impact the patentability of the claims and that the claims are clearly patentable regardless of the presence of this term.

In this regard, Applicants wish to make note a telephone interview with Examiner Sugarman, who is in charge of the present application. During this telephone interview, which took place on February 25, 2004, Applicants informed the Examiner of their intention to delete this term from claim 1 and submitted to him that the deletion of this term does not impact the patentability of the claims. Applicants further requested, and the Examiner agreed, that if, upon receiving the amendment, he is of the opinion that this deletion impacts the patentability of the claims, he will contact them to resolve any outstanding issue. The

Examiner is respectfully thanked for his courtesy, for his cooperation, and for his understanding.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request confirmation of the allowability of claims 1-7 and forwarding of the present case to allowance for issue in due course. Such action is respectfully requested and is now believed to be appropriate and proper.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

By the present Response, Applicants have made of record a telephone interview with the Examiner. Applicants have canceled the non-elected and the only rejected claims. Applicants have further amended the allowed claims to improve the language thereof, while not narrowing the scope of the claims. Additionally, Applicants have deleted a phrase not necessary for the patentability of the pending claims.

Applicants respectfully request an indication confirming the allowability of all the claims pending in the present application, in due course.

The amendments to the claims made in this amendment have not been made to overcome the prior art, and thus, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach hereto.

Should there by any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
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March 1, 2004
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